

Ogden, PA -- Today, Congressman Joe Sestak, a former Fire Marshal in the Navy and a member of the Congressional Fire Services Caucus, spoke at the Ogden Fire Company's 83rd Anniversary Banquet.

"The Ogden Fire Company is the cornerstone of this community," noted Joe at the banquet. "One of the greatest services in my district comes from first responders who are on the frontlines protecting us. They are required to balance the demands of their service with their families and full-time careers. That is why I am so pleased to join the Ogden Fire Company at today's 83rd Anniversary Banquet."

The Ogden Fire Company originally started as a sports association, but switched to fire fighting in 1923, equipped with a truck loaned from the Viscose Fire Company in Marcus Hook and 30 members. It was not until 1955 that the Ogden Fire Company have its first brand new piece of equipment, a 1955 American LaFrance 750 gallon per minute pumper. Ambulance service was later added in 1964. Today, the 46 active members of the Ogden Fire Company protect over 6,700 households.

"While much has changed over the life of the Ogden Fire Company, the service of these brave men and women has been steadfast," added Joe.

At the banquet, Joe also spoke of his support and cosponsorship of bipartisan legislation to provide tax relief for volunteer first responders. The legislation, the Volunteer Firefighter's Tax Incentive Protection Act (H.R. 943), would allow state and local governments the flexibility to develop beneficial tax incentives, including property tax abatements, retirement awards, death benefits, health benefits, and state income tax credits, for encouraging recruitment and retention for volunteer firefighters and emergency medical personnel. Joe hopes that the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and local municipalities will continue to work to provide their volunteer emergency responders with the appropriate incentives, rewarding them for the first-class service they offer the citizens of Pennsylvania.

"As a Fire Marshal in the Navy, I know of the selfless commitment of first-responders. It is vital we enact legislation that will encourage the recruitment and retention of these invaluable members of our community," stated Joe.

Joe plans to visit all the fire and police stations in the district. He has already visited Ridley Park Fire Co. 1, Radnor Fire Co., Swarthmore Fire Co., Folsom Fire Co., Llanerch Fire Co., Prospect Park Fire Department, Cardington-Stonehurst Fire Company, Brookline Fire Company, and Essington Fire Company. On Saturday, March 3, Joe attended the 101st Annual Awards dinner of the Delaware County Firemen's Association of the State of Pennsylvania.

*Born and raised in Delaware County, former 3-star Admiral Joe Sestak served in the Navy for 31 years and now serves as the Representative from the 7th District of Pennsylvania. He led a series of operational commands at sea, including Commander of an aircraft carrier battle group of 30 U.S. and allied ships with over 15,000 sailors and 100 aircraft that conducted operations in Afghanistan and Iraq. After 9/11, Joe was the first Director of "Deep Blue," the Navy's anti-terrorism unit that established strategic and operations policies for the "Global War on Terrorism." He served as President Clinton's Director for Defense Policy at the National Security Council in the White House, and holds a Ph.D. in Political Economy and Government from Harvard University. According to the office of the House Historian, Joe is the highest-ranking former military officer ever to serve in the U.S. House of Representatives.*

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